

Message Text

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22

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 SS-15 SP-02 MC-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-07 EB-07 AID-05 IGA-02

TRSE-00 L-03 /073 W

----- 018464

R 161504Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6172

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USDOC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 1980

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BEXP, MR

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN MILITARY PURCHASES FROM NAPCO

REF: (A) NOUAKCHOTT 1602 (NOTAL), (B) NOUAKCHOTT 1676 (NOTAL),
(C) STATE 157299, (D) STATE 179636 (NOTAL), (E) STATE 183133
(NOTAL)

1. TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE, NEIL H, HOLM, OF NAPCO INDUSTRIES INC., HOPKINS, MINNESOTA, HAS BEEN IN MAURITANIA FOR PAST TEN DAYS. HOLM, WHO DOES NOT SPEAK FRENCH, WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FRENCH-SPEAKING NAPCO EMPLOYEE (FRENCH NATIONAL BORN IN ALGERIA. FRENCHMAN APPARENTLY MANAGED TO IRRITATE EVERY MAURITANIAN HE MET DURING HIS FIRST 24 HOURS IN COUNTRY. FORTUNATELY, HOLM HAD COMMON SENSE TO SEND HIM BACK TO US ON NEXT PLANE OUT.

2. HOLM HAS BEEN WORKING WITH MAURITANIAN ARMY AND PRIVATE COMPANY (SCIM) ESTABLISHED BY DR. BA BOCAR ALPHA FOR PURPOSE, AMONG OTHERS, OF IMPORTING MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR GIRM ARMED SERVICES. HOLM TOLD EMBOFF THAT 100 AN/PRC-77 RADIOS (REFS C & D) HAVE ARRIVED IN COUNTRY AND ARE CURRENTLY BEING READIED FOR USE. TWO HUNDRED MORE RADIOS AND SOME
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FIELD TELEPHONE GEAR ARE IN THE PIPELINE. ONE HUNDRED

AMERICAN MOTOR JEEPS (REFS C & DL HAVE BEEN LOADED AT BALTIMORE AND ARE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN MAURITANIA, REPORTEDLY AT NORTHERN PORT OF MOUADHIBOU, IN SEVERAL WEEKS. ACCORDING TO HOLM, JEEPS ARE COMMERCIAL VERSION ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN OUTFITTED WITH SOME HEAVY-DUTY EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS PACKAGES. HOLM WAS VAGUE ABOUT SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS, ALTHOUGH HE DOUBTED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO FIND FRENCH-SPEAKING AMERICAN MECHANICS TO SET UP A SERVICE DEPOT. HOLM SAID NAPCO IS SATISFIED WITH FIRM PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS. FIRST ONE HUNDRED RADIOS HAVE ALREADY BEEN PAID FOR AND NAPCO HAS RECEIVED 50 PERCENT DOWNPAYMENT FOR JEEPS. NOTING THAT NAPCO HAS PREVIOUSLY SOLD MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ZAIRE AND CAMEROON, HOLM SAID COMPANY HOPES TO EXPAND ITS SALES TO MAURITANIA AND TO OTHER NEARBY COUNTRIES.

3. HOLM, WHO ENCOUNTERED EMBOFF ACCIDENTALLY, HAD NO INTENTION TO CALL AT EMBASSY DURING HIS STAY IN MAURITANIA. WHEN HE COMMENTED THAT NAPCO PRESIDENT JACOB WILL ARRIVE IN MAURITANIA SEPTEMBER 5, EMBOFF URGED HOLM TO SUGGEST THAT JACOB CALL AT EMBASSY. HOLM PROMISED TO DO THIS AND, AT SAME TIME, APOLOGIZED FOR NOT TAKING INITIATIVE TO VISIT EMBASSY. HE ADMITTED THAT THIS WAS FIRST TIME IN ALL HIS TRAVELS THAT HE HAD ENDED UP AT AMERICAN EMBASSY AND THAT RESULTING FROM CHANCE MEETING WITH EMBOFF. IF DEPARTMENT IS IN CONTACT WITH JACOB BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR MAURITANIA, WE URGE THAT DEPARTMENT ASK JACOB TO CALL AT EMBASSY. GIVEN FACT THAT JEEPS ARE ALL RPT ALL COMMERCIAL VERSION, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO RAISE QUESTION OF TREATMENT OF LOCAL JEEP DEALER WITH NAPCO AND COMMERCE, AND THROUGH LATTER WITH AMERICAN MOTORS CORPORATION. (OUR LONG RANGE OBJECT IS STILL TO PUSH AMC INTO CREATING A SOLID SALES AND MAINTENANCE BASE IN MAURITANIA AND INTO MOUNTING VIGOROUS EFFORT TO TAKE PART OF THIS LUCRATIVE MARKET AWAY FROM BRITISH AND JAPANESE.)

HANDYSIDE

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